

# via pacis

*The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community*

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## Stop Homeless Evictions in Des Moines

*By Patrick Stall*

Every six months or so since fall 2009, the City of Des Moines has sent police officers and city workers armed with batons, bulldozers and dumpsters to clear out the camps of homeless folks down by the river. Tents are ripped up, personal effects smashed and our homeless residents' belongings, often all they have, are thrown in the dump. The homeless are told to go to municipal shelters, which are always over capacity, and are left with the clothes on their backs and no place to go. This violence is a disgrace to our city.

We are at a moment when business is booming for insurance companies and developers in Des Moines. Our City Council saw fit to guarantee a \$20 million loan for a hotel by the convention center, and hundreds of houses sit empty, foreclosed on or owned by speculators. There are more empty houses than there are homeless people in Des Moines, and plenty of money in the city coffers to subsidize low-income housing. The bottom line is that the City of Des Moines continues to evict folks with no place to go without offering them any alternative.

The clear availability of city resources, combined with the violence of Des Moines' evictions represent a class war, one being waged by local economic elites and their representatives in city government on the most vulnerable among us.

It is with this recognition that the Des Moines Workers' Alliance, in conjunction with the Des Moines Catholic Worker, launched a grassroots campaign against these evictions this July. Since the 11th of that month, DSM Workers' Alliance members, Catholic Workers, and dozens of homeless folks have taken the city to task for its evictions. We have staged numerous rallies, called out the City Council at every one of its meetings for the past three months, published letters to the editor and mailed hundreds of postcards and logged hundreds of calls to city officials, urging them to stop the evictions. Recently, we have escalated our campaign by posting an eviction notice on the front door of the city official in charge of executing the eviction (Phil Delafield), with plans to return in force.

The city, for its part, has agreed to meet with us but has not given in to our demands. We will continue to escalate pressure through non-violent tactics until all those who need it are afforded decent shelter and the evictions are replaced by housing programs – to be clear, what we demand is that the city house folks camping out rather than violently and cruelly destroying their camps. Our campaign is growing daily, and will continue until housing is a right.

Winter is coming. This issue is becoming more relevant to our homeless friends and loved ones and all of us moved by conscience with every passing week. Join our campaign – attend a protest, write a letter to the editor, and help our guests not only through charity but by speaking out for housing justice.



Vito Andolie and Pastor Alejandro Alfarez-Santiz marching to Des Moines City Council on July 25, 2016.

## Des Moines Workers' Alliance Report on Prison Organizing

*By Conor Murphy and Jack Petsche*

One initiative of the Des Moines Workers' Alliance, a new working-class organization that includes members of the Des Moines Catholic Worker, is focused around prisons. The way we are organizing this initiative is broadly working class, in the sense that we understand that capitalism's class society is inextricably linked with mass incarceration. This working-class approach means building long-term networks of incarcerated people within prisons and people on the outside to engage in direct action.

Letter writing is a major component of our organizing, as it is a method of direct communication we can have with many incarcerated comrades. We have been holding letter-writing meetings twice a month, writing prisoners across the state of Iowa, building friendships and learning about the issues they face behind bars. The issues are many: brutality by guards against inmates, medical negligence, abuse of mentally ill inmates and other terrible violations to human welfare and dignity.

Terrance Sayles, a comrade inside, let us know about his mistreatment at the hands of prison guards at Iowa State Penitentiary. We were able to mobilize family, friends and other comrades to call the warden at Iowa State Penitentiary and the head of the Iowa Department Of Corrections. We decried Terrance's treatment and demanded access to medical care and an investigation into the abuses. In addition to the phone blast, we rallied outside of the Iowa Department of Corrections, emphasizing our demands. After these actions, we received reports from family members of those incarcerated at Iowa State Penitentiary in Ft. Madison, Iowa that investigators had been asking questions about mistreatment of those incarcerated. The questions were not just limited to incidences of assault on inmates by correctional officers, but touched on all aspects of institutional treatment of the incarcerated.

We are going to continue having letter writing meetings, compiling grievances, and further building networks inside and outside to build a movement in Iowa that demands something better than mass incarceration!

The Bob Cook House has been invaluable in the prison organizing we have been involved in. It has allowed us to maintain strong connections to both Community Corrections as well as folks who are waiting to be released from prison and need a place to stay.

In our work in dealing with folks being released from prison, it has become even more apparent just how bad it is out there for the incarcerated and their families. Their needs are endless and the resources to provide for these needs are nonexistent. Many of the folks we come in contact with who are being released from prison are wearing the clothes on their back, have no money, no job prospects, no transportation and no family that can help. Our goal at the Bob Cook House is to alleviate or mitigate the financial and material strain that exists upon leaving prison. Our resources are limited, but we currently have three people living in the Bob Cook House, all of whom have spent years in prison, with another on the way waiting to be released from prison. Thanks to all who are supporting our work.



Bob Cook and members of Terrance Sayles' family rallying at the Iowa Department of Corrections on August 3, 2016.



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SUBSCRIPTIONS

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THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER COMMUNITY

*The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition.*

*We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.*

BECOMING A DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or visit our website: [www.dmcatholicworker.org](http://www.dmcatholicworker.org).

MAILING ADDRESS

Des Moines Catholic Worker  
PO Box 4551  
Des Moines IA 50305

BISHOP DINGMAN HOUSE

(Drop-in Center and Business Phone)  
1310 7th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-243-0765  
Residents: Gilbert Landolt, William Petsche, Alex Iwasa

PHIL BERRIGAN HOUSE

713 Indiana Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-282-4781  
[frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com)  
Residents: Frank Cordaro, Bob Cook

RACHEL CORRIE HOUSE

1301 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-330-2172  
Residents: Julie Brown, Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs, Taylor Vander Well, Patrick Stall, Conor Murphy

CHELSEA MANNING HOUSE

1317 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-777-2180  
Residents: Norman Searah, Ed Bloomer, Colyn Burbank, Hilary Burbank, Bryan Morrissey, Al Burney, Annie Patton

BOB COOK HOUSE FOR PRISON ABOLITION

1433 9th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-777-2180  
Residents: Jack Petsche, Darius Davenport

WEEKLY LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY

Mondays, 7:00 p.m. Berrigan House.  
Call to confirm.

MONTHLY VETERANS FOR PEACE MEETING

Berrigan House. For more information, contact Gil Landolt at [peacevet@hotmail.com](mailto:peacevet@hotmail.com) or call 515-333-2180.

WEEKLY AA MEETING

Fridays, 5:00 pm, Berrigan house

THE CHIAPAS PROJECT

Chiapas, Mexico  
Richard Flamer  
[flamerrichard@hotmail.com](mailto:flamerrichard@hotmail.com)

*As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.*  
-Dorothy Day



Visit the DMCW Web page

<http://dmcatholicworker.org>

**See on home page:** DMCW's statement in support of women's ordination and DMCW Julie Brown's featured Des Moines Register article "Julie Brown finds her tribe." Visit the Berrigan page and find links to the three e-mail listservs that Frank and Berrigan House maintain. Go to the Rachel Corrie page for updates on the Rachel Corrie Project. You will also find a page for our newsletter with issues for at least five years back with hopes of getting a complete digital copy of all the VPs.'as time, \$\$\$ and expertise makes itself known. There is a page on how to help and one on our community, still in development . . . The person behind our web page effort is Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs. Aaron is also responsible for our Occupy the World Food Prize campaign web page, which is linked on the Berrigan page. Aaron welcomes feedback.

**Contact him at [flotson@gmail.com](mailto:flotson@gmail.com) and check out his blog, <http://flotson.net>**



Only God Knows  
(part 2)

"Hello" every living soul  
God bless you  
as I continue to write  
straight into part two

as you take time to read  
and pay attention  
as I picked up the  
Spiritual Phone

here's the words and message  
I heard in this tone.

Salvage your life, reclaim  
be cleansed, and renew  
your soul

let every wrong that  
means you no right  
or no good, be left in  
the past

Remember put your God  
first, that starts your new  
goal

do my will, be obedient  
and see how I bless you to  
live and how long you will  
last

on this earth I'll love,  
guide you and protect you

put on the full armor  
and see how I will not  
allow no evil, wicked  
or the hands of wrongdoers  
touch you

Keep the faith in me  
because I'm your one  
and only God, and created  
blessed and love you. So you  
know it's true, and here we goes  
"Remember" only God knows.



If It's God's Will

If you're still here today  
thank the Good Lord  
you made it through  
yesterday

Today is a brand new day  
so what happened  
the other day has passed  
away just like the time

God woke you up  
and allowed you to see this day  
so leave yesterday  
with a note on faded songs  
that day is gone  
and it's supposed to be left  
behind

it's not what you think  
or a thought in the back  
of your mind

as you're still going through  
this day  
and you're still reading this  
you know it's true

Believe in your heart  
with faith, because you  
know that God  
loves you

you will also make it through  
tomorrow.  
God will allow you to  
make it through  
you know exactly how you  
feel.  
Believe and trust  
if it's God's will  
you will. Amen.

# Join the Fight Against the Dakota Access/ Bakken Pipeline!

By Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs

This April, members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe began a protest encampment near Cannon Ball, N.D. to oppose construction of the Dakota Access/Bakken Pipeline. Since that time, more than 280 tribes have joined them, along with diverse allies including impacted landowners in Iowa and others opposed to exploitive corporate profiteering at the expense of ordinary people and our environment. The cause has gained international attention. Due to these non-violent protests, which have included numerous acts of civil disobedience, jail time for protestors, violent attacks by private mercenaries using attack dogs, and the destruction of historical sites held sacred by the Standing Rock Sioux, the Department of Justice, the Army and the Interior Department have recently announced that construction will be paused on the pipeline near North Dakota's Lake Oahe, a major water source on the Missouri River for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

But history tells us that this fight is far from over. Up till now, all branches of government, from local to state to federal, and the regulatory agencies tasked with protecting our environment and ensuring the sovereignty of Native American tribes and observance of the legal agreements between the U.S. and tribal governments, have failed us. It is only because of the public pressure created by non-violent resistance that we have arrived at this point. And without increased and sustained pressure we can assume that the wealthy private interests who stand to benefit from the pipeline will ultimately get their way. Now more than ever it is time for all people of conscience to dig in and engage with this fight.

Here in Iowa, after more than a year of work through "proper channels" failed to stop the pipeline by pressuring the Iowa Utilities Board and the Army Corps of Engineers to do their jobs, the campaign of civil resistance has escalated. On August 31, 30 individuals non-violently blocked access to a pipeline construction site in Boone County and were arrested, including myself and Des Moines Catholic Worker Patrick Stall. Des Moines Catholic Worker Frank Cordaro and former community member Patti McKee led the non-violence training. Brenna Cussen Anglada from St. Isidore Catholic Worker Farm in Wisconsin was also arrested, and Alice McGary and Maria Bergh from Mustard Seed Community Farm near Ames, along with members of Hope House



Des Moines Catholic Workers Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs and Patrick Stall were among the 30 arrested for non-violently blockading a pipeline construction site on August 31, 2016 in Boone County, Iowa. Photo: Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement.

in Dubuque, were present in solidarity. Even as I write this, three more civil disobedience actions are underway simultaneously in three separate locations in Iowa, and more are planned soon. Please consider joining these efforts.

Des Moines Catholic Workers Jessica Reznicek and Frank Cordaro have begun a protest encampment by the Mississippi River near Keokuk and are inviting others to join them. They can be reached at (515) 490-2490 or by emailing frank.cordaro@gmail.com.

Another protest encampment, the River Guardian Camp, has also sprung up near the Norton's Ford Access on the Des Moines River in Boone County. For more information, please contact Mark Edwards at (515) 230-7274 or markedwards60@gmail.com.

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, along with Bold Iowa and members of the Bakken Pipeline Resistance Coalition, are also planning actions later in September. To get involved with these actions, contact Adam Mason at Iowa CCI: (515) 282-0484 or adam@iowacci.org.

The time to act is now. This pipeline, if built, will spill, causing incalculable harm to the water and the land that sustains us. Catastrophic climate change effects have already begun, and anything less than total divestment from the global fossil fuel economy and transition to renewable energy will render our planet unlivable. The survival of our planet and all its inhabitants depends on our actions today. Please get involved.



Artwork by Charles Mertes.



Jess Reznicek blocking a pipeline construction site near Keokuk on August 30, 2016.



150 people marched against the Bakken/Dakota Access pipeline on September 10 near Keokuk.



# Des Moines Catholic Workers Celebrate 40 Years

By John Noble

From August 26-28, 2016, the Des Moines Catholic Worker celebrated 40 years of peace and justice activism here in Des Moines. Our 40th Anniversary celebration was filled with old friends and new faces alike, and it was exciting to both reminisce on our community's rich history and dream about the decades to come. In light of the diocesan sanction we received for our advocacy for Catholic gender equality, women's ordination was a major focus of the weekend.

We opened the weekend at Trinity United Methodist Church with a keynote address from long-time friend of the community Roy Bourgeois, who was dismissed from the priesthood in 2012 for his support of women's ordination. He spoke beautifully on the links between global social justice and the women's ordination movement/LGBTQIA movement within the Catholic Church. He walked us through his advocacy founding School of the Americas Watch, which brought the horrific human rights abuses of our government in Central and South America into the light of day.

Roy talked about how it was this advocacy for peace and justice that led him to support the causes of women's ordination and LGBTQIA equality in Catholicism. Afterwards, he answered questions and engaged the 100+ attendees in a dialogue about the struggle for gender justice and our struggle against militaristic and capitalistic forces of empire. In this dialogue, we discussed the mass movement we need to renew the face of our earth and Church. Finally, we blessed a member of the community discerning ordination with the global womenpriests movement.

Many people came away from Roy's speech engaged and

refreshed. He eloquently reminded us that the struggle for gender-inclusive ordination and open Communion is not, as some would suggest, separate from the Catholic Worker's fight against militarism and economic injustice. No, the struggle for women's ordination is deeply bound up in our fight for a new society founded on the principles of peace, justice, and equality. We cannot have a women's ordination movement that does not address the military and economic empires of our day, just as we cannot have a Catholic peace and justice movement without fearless advocacy for gender equality in the Catholic Church. The Des Moines Catholic Worker has taken on both of these fights, and we urge all of our Catholic and Catholic Worker siblings to do the same.

On Saturday, we gathered once again in community for a picnic with talented musical guests from across the country, who sang peace and justice anthems and invigorated our spirits. Afterwards, we returned to Trinity UMC for a panel entitled "More Listening, Less Judging: Imagining a Church of Gender Justice," where we continued our dialogue from Friday with local and national advocates for women's ordination. Panelists included Marion Flynn of the Women's Ordination Conference, Roy Bourgeois, Roman Catholic Womenpriests Mary Kay Kusner & Janice Sevre-Duszynska, and Drake University students Clio Cullison and Mary Traxler. Each panelist discussed their relationship with the Catholic Church, their struggle to renew the Church, and how the Catholic Church can and should reject both patriarchy and imperialism. After the panel, we watched a trailer for the film *Radical Grace*, a sponsor of the weekend's celebration. The panel was followed by snacks and social time at the Bishop Dingman House.

On Sunday, we held an inclusive Eucharistic liturgy under a tent across from the Bishop Dingman House, with two Roman Catholic Womenpriests (Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska and Rev. Mary Kay Kusner) presiding. Rev. Sevre-Duszynska gave a beautiful homily on the Catholic Worker's history and advocacy, and we shared an inclusive and open Eucharistic meal of solidarity together. The community blessed the bread and the wine, and shared it with each other. One of the most powerful moments of the entire weekend for me was seeing Rev. Mary Kay share the Eucharistic cup with Rev. Janice. The hierarchy has told these two women that they cannot celebrate or receive Eucharist. At the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th, they shared Eucharist with each other. It was not a Eucharist dependent on the Vatican's approval or official rubrics. It was a sacrament of feminist liberation and lay empowerment, blessed by the entire, many-gendered community.

The final Eucharist that we celebrated together exemplifies the best of the Catholic Worker movement: radical inclusiveness, action for justice, global solidarity, and connection across lines of difference. This community has taken deep risks for peace and justice for four decades. May there be many more to come, and may our movement be marked with humility, strength, and fearless action to inspire a mass movement for liberation.

*John Noble is a Drake University student and former intern with the Des Moines Catholic Worker. He currently works for Downtown Disciples and Roman Catholic Womenpriests-USA.*



The DMCW 40th anniversary celebration concluded with a Eucharistic liturgy led by Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska and Rev. Mary Kay Kusner on August 28, 2016.

## Thank You!

The Des Moines Catholic Worker community would like to thank the co-sponsors of our 40th Anniversary celebration:

Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests  
Call To Action  
Des Moines Intentional Eucharistic Community  
Full Circle Catholic Community – Iowa City  
National Coalition of American Nuns  
New Ways Ministry  
Radical Grace  
Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research  
Women's Ordination Conference  
8th Day Center For Justice

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the following groups and individuals who helped make our 40th Anniversary such a joyous celebration:

Roy Bourgeois  
Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska

Rev. Mary Kay Kusner  
Marion Flynn  
Clio Cullison  
Mary Traxler  
Josh Brown, Jo Mounsey and the Des Moines Prime Timers  
Trinity United Methodist Church  
Joe Cordaro and the staff of St. Anthony Catholic School  
Our DMCW summer interns: Conor Murphy, Kate Gorden, Phoebe Clark and John Noble  
Isaiah Ritzmann  
Tasha Koekenhoff  
Jim and Charlotte Noble  
Cindy Mumm  
Celeste Egger  
Willa Bickham and Viva Catholic Worker House  
Bethel Mission and Hope Ministries  
Jim Mauro and Mauro Insurance  
Ken Newman  
In the Bag  
George Houk

# Holy Works and Holy Shit

By Frank Cordaro

I never thought traveling to Boston to participate in a conference at Harvard Divinity School would lead me to reexamine my previous understanding of “shit” as the real “problem with humanity.” I perfected this bad “Shit Theory” back when I was a country priest, during the Iowa farm crisis of the 1980s. I went public with this theory in a speech I gave for the Iowa chapter of National Association of Social Workers in 1991 when I closed my talk with the following:

“I have a theory. This is the first time I am going public with it. It’s called my ‘Shit Theory.’ It came to me while I was out in my rural parish, driving those beautiful dirt and rock roads of Harrison County. I’d looked all around me and I was blown away to think that there is hardly a piece of land in all of Harrison County that human beings have not disturbed. When animals stake out their territory they urinate to create the borders. That is exactly what we human beings have done to the whole surface of the earth. There are very few places in the world that have not been disturbed, that have not been pissed on by the human race.

The problem with humanity is we don’t know what to do with our waste, our shit. The oldest shit around was buried tens of thousands of years ago. It is now petroleum. What is petroleum but dead living things and that is what shit is. We take this old shit out of the ground and spew it into the land, air, and sea, poisoning every corner of the world with this shit.

Now this old shit is bad shit but nothing is as bad as the new shit. The newest shit is man-made shit, plutonium. There is no safe place for us to put this new shit. It will last over 200 thousand years poisoning and killing life throughout its lifespan. The problem with humanity is we don’t know what to do with our shit.”

Over a year ago, Dan McKanan got Mike Miles of Anathoth Catholic Worker Farm, Jake Olzen of Jagerstatter Catholic Worker Farm and me to sign on to doing two workshops at “The Spirit of Sustainable Agriculture” conference at Harvard Divinity School, March 31-April 1, 2016.

Mike and Jake are real Catholic Worker farmers. I am a Catholic Worker who comes from a farm state.

Before teaching at Harvard Divinity School, Dan McKanan taught at St. John’s in Collegeville, MN. During this time Dan wrote the book *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy*.

While writing the book, Dan visited and got to know Mike Miles and Barb Kase at the Anathoth Catholic Worker Farm. Dan’s been aware of the regenerative farming practices that Mike and Barb were using on their land and he knew of Mike’s involvement with the Occupy the World Food Prize campaign. So when invites went out to people and organizations to participate in the Divinity School’s agriculture conference, Dan got us Catholic Workers two workshop slots in the larger conference. Mike and Jake gave one workshop entitled “Sacramental Agriculture: Regenerative Farming and the Divine Intent.” The next day, Jake and I gave a workshop entitled “Resistance and Resilience: Towards a Regenerative Land Ethic.”

The conference was wonderful. Plus, Mike, Barb, Jake and I managed to make the trip a real road trip, visiting the Gracys in Ithaca, NY on the way out and visiting Jonah House, Liz McAlister and Srs. Ardeth Platte and Carol Gilbert and

Viva Catholic Worker House with Brendan Walsh and Willa Bickham in Baltimore, MD on our way home.

What was most beneficial for me was the time I had coming and going with Mike, Barb and Jake, discussing their new radical way of farming and the “symbiotic relationships” they are creating with their dirt and animals in the process.

I began to see these symbiotic relationships much like the relationship we try to create with our guests at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Doing hospitality is all about relationships, creating human space for host and guest alike. From our Catholic Worker lens, our Works of Mercy set in motion the symbiotic relationships that renew and make whole broken human spirits. We see Jesus in each of the people we serve. And in doing so, both the servers and our guests benefit and are changed for the better in the process.

The same kind of symbiotic relationships are happening with the regenerative farming movement. The farmer’s work is to serve the microscopic animals in the soil. These little creators are among “the least of these” in our current global, corporate, industrial, “big fits all” model of feeding the world. By nurturing the microscopic animals in the soil, the farmer and the little dirt creators both benefit and are changed for the better in the process.

In the Midwest, regenerative farming starts with our relationship with the remaining microscopic animals left in our dirt. Mike says there are supposed to be millions and millions of these microscopic animals in our soil. The health and vitality of the dirt that can grow naturally all that we humans need to eat depends on these life forms. And because of Industrial Ag, these dirt creators are dying off at an alarming and detrimental rate! Regenerative farming practices can reverse this mass Industrial Ag microscopic animal kill-off and bring back the lost dirt life, building back up our thinning dirt base.

The way regenerative farming does this is by looking through an eco-biology lens (not the corporate chemical lens of Industrial Ag). With an eco-biological lens, we know where the microscopic animal filled “Midwest dirt” came from. The soil white settlers discovered after the U.S. stole the land from Native Americans was created over centuries by giant bison herds roaming the lands, grazing, pooping, peeing, trampling and moving on.

Regenerative farming tries to replicate this “Bison land use” plan with cows and pigs. The poop and pee that yesterday’s bison and today’s ruminants add to soil is way important. However, Mike said “the most important thing they (today’s cows) do is prune plants which stimulates root growth and clears plant material out of the way so the sun can hit smaller plants that are growing. The trampling part creates divots where rain can pool and infiltrate into the soil and it also pushes seeds into contact with soil which starts new plants. Poop and pee is important but the physical disturbance of the plants is essential.”

The main job for today’s pigs Mike said “is to recycle food that would otherwise be wasted. Roughly 1/3 of food in the U.S. is wasted. If we could send it through pigs, we get meat that doesn’t depend on grain being grown on cropland.”

If done properly, regenerative farming practices, in sync with the local dirt ecology, away from the big factory scale, row crop farming of today in Iowa towards a “human scale” way of farming where small is better than big, can provide



Early this year, Rev. Frank Cordaro in Logan Iowa, granted sanctuary to a manure spreader... “I’d like to see more people bring equipment to churchyards and make the FDIC take it off (Church property). They’re breaking people out here.”

Wall Street Journal, April 13, 1987

enough food for everybody on the planet.

This is the exact opposite way Industrial Ag uses cows and pigs in their corporate global food system in Iowa. The “divine intent” of cows and pigs for Iowa’s Industrial Ag system is for their meat and dairy products to feed people. Plus, by equal divine intent, the corporate global food system would have us believe they are the best human means available to feed the world. Ironically, the dark side of this whole 100-year industrial “war-based” agriculture model is all the “bad shit” I talked about in my 1991 speech.

From a regenerative farming perspective, the divine intent of today’s cows and pigs is their valued poop and pee, and their meat for humans to eat is only a secondary use. In other words, theirs is HOLY SHIT!

Mike said, “We can at least say regenerative farming is a Work of Mercy because when practiced, it respects all the life, even the microscopic animals we don’t see. And it is the community of life forms both above and below the soil that increases all that is good and joyful in creation.”

That sounds sacramental to me. Regenerative farming is a way of farming in which the relationships between the living beings in the soil, the animals on top of the soil and human beings are made holy.

I now believe, thanks to my time with Mike and Barb and Jake, the divine intent of their Iowa cows and pigs is their Holy Shit. And that our Catholic Worker farmers are in the same “symbiotic relationship” with their dirt that we are with our guests, redeeming the world one act of love at a time, person to person, human to dirt (Micah 4:4).



Jake Olzen, Frank Cordaro and Mike Miles at “The Spirit of Sustainable Agriculture” conference at Harvard Divinity School, March 31, 2016.





Roy Bourgeois delivered the keynote address for the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary celebration at Trinity United Methodist Church on August 26, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Brian Stall, Patrick Stall, Conor Murphy, Marion Flynn, John Noble, Sean Calhoun, Kate Gorden at the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary celebration on August 27, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Marion Flynn, Roy Bourgeois, Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszyńska, Mary Traxler, Clio Cullison and Rev. Mary Kay Kusner held a panel discussion entitled "More Listening, Less Judging: Imagining a Church of Gender Justice" at Trinity United Methodist Church on August 27, 2016 as part of the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary celebration. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Teenah Woodard with Des Moines Veterans for Peace and the Des Moines Catholic Worker at the Iowa State Fair Veterans' Day Parade on August 15, 2016



Annie Patton at the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary picnic on August 27, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Joe Mounsey and Josh Brown's delicious party spread for the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary at Dingman House on August 27, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Des Moines Veterans for Peace and the Des Moines Catholic Worker at the Iowa State Fair Veterans' Day Parade on August 15, 2016.



Servers at the Des Moines Catholic Worker's Anniversary picnic on August 27, 2016: Stu Amsel, Josh Brown, Doug Mortimer, Christina, Melonie Stall. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Colyn Burbank looks on as neighborhood children enjoy toys donated by In the Bag at the Des Moines Catholic Worker's 40th Anniversary on August 27, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



Steve Jacobs and Frank Cordaro with at Berrigan House, August 26, 2016. Photo: Mauro Heck.



# 2016 Berrigan House Update: “Thank You Aunt Mary!”

By Frank Cordaro

My mother had ten brothers and sisters. They were brought up on a fruit and vegetable truck farm on the south side of Des Moines. My grandfather Frank Sposeto used horses to work his fields up to 1965! They were part of the WWII generation, and just as it was for so many others in their generation, the post-WWII years were opportunities for farm kids to move to the city. This was certainly true for the Sposeto family of Des Moines.

And my Aunt Mary ended up in NYC on the west side of Central Park, on W 68th St. She remained single her whole life. She was an artist and painting was her passion. NYC was her love. When we first visited her in the 1960s, she was a fashion design graphic artist, which meant her ink drawings were used for the New York Times fashion ads. She was cosmopolitan! Liberal! Well-read and a practicing progressive Catholic. She was a lot of fun too. She was the go-to person for a whole generation of Sposeto first cousins. When we needed to get out of Des Moines and see the Big Apple she was the person we sought.

Aunt Mary was a confidant of mine when I entered seminary the first time in 1973. I used to see her weekly during my 1974 summer at St. Augustine's Parish in the South Bronx. When I dropped out of seminary to start the Des Moines Catholic Worker in 1976, Aunt Mary supported me. I

stayed with her or visited whenever I was in NYC, which was something I did often in my early years at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. She was a go-to person for me for personal counsel back in the day. She did not always understand me. She always supported me when support was needed. Like my mom, Aunt Mary counseled me to always follow my heart. To bring her to mind is magical for me now.

Aunt Mary died last year and she left me \$80,000 for the Des Moines Catholic Worker! Wow... such a gift posed interesting challenges for me. I have intentionally avoided paying federal income taxes my whole adult life by not filing yearly tax reports. I've got thousands of dollars of unpaid court cost, fines and jail fees to Polk County for my years of criminal activity hanging over me. I've got nothing coming to me from Social Security because I paid nothing into it. And I just turned 65 and was applying for health care “of last resort” with Polk County. So cashing an \$80,000 check left a “big target” in my bank for the Feds, state and local governments to come get what I owe them!

I took the cash and put it in my safety deposit box at my bank. So far, with Aunt Mary's money I was able to give \$50,000 to the purchase of the Rev. Bob Cook House. Spent another \$15,000 covering Jessica Reznicek's Hammer of Justice campaign, a few donations to friends and groups and the Berrigan House bills for the last six months. We have enough to pay our Berrigan House bills into 2017.



This year's 2016 Berrigan House Report is best done in the last four issue of *via pacis*. These are extraordinary days for us in the Des Moines Catholic Worker community. And I am so happy that a big chunk of Aunt Mary's money and legacy will be part of the Rev. Bob Cook House.

Thank you Aunt Mary.

## Norman's Whereabouts

By Norman Searah

Hello there! I'm starting my article after spending a night in the Chicago Bus Station like I do at times. I like it there. When I got back to the Catholic Worker I found out that Jessica, Al, Gilbert and Alex went to go protest the Bakken pipeline that is going all the way down to Texas to be refined and shipped off somewhere. I get the “Native Sun Newspaper” once a week which is ok with me. In August there is an article with a picture of young people running and it looks like Jessica in the back running with them. The title reads, “Standing Rock Sues Feds for Granting Private Oil Pipeline Permits Across Missouri River.” We're seeing our Mother Earth and Nature along with national parks and land hurting along with the people too.

It's been a long time since I've been to the Iowa State Fair not just because of the heat but also the crowd. I was classified 4F, but I had flat feet. I wasn't too smart, I guess I was simple too. I never got to go to Vietnam to fight. I was hurt so I ran away and saw a few men that were kids at the time hitchhiking back to their base in their army clothes. I thought it was cool because they want to feel young while still alive. I recall them in my thoughts. I recall that in most of all the wars it wasn't just white men doing the fighting and dying. All I see at the state fair is whites. I honor them for their service and their sacrifice but I honor the Indians, Blacks, Spanish and all the people that fought in wars and others that fought wars that are untold and should be at this state fair when they have a veterans parade. The state fair should invite them. The tribe and other Indians in Iowa should get together with other cultures in Iowa and see what they can come up with for the fair. And then I might come back to see the fair and cheer for Iowa.

Gilbert and Al are back from North Dakota, maybe from Standing Rock and some in Washington D.C. To me they are heroes. I wish I had better legs to walk well and run. I am also getting old.

I also honor the Native American Indians and the people along with the EPA for voting “no.” I am speaking of all the people even the Indians. They are people too. They voted no to this pit mine that would destroy their livelihood. It's in Alaska where they live. What could have been the biggest fishery; its yearly income is 480 million dollars. They deal with a lot of people and catch a lot of fish, not just for themselves but for the United States of America. In fact, I recall a staff person named Claire who worked at a canning factory in Alaska. I looked it up and it's a beautiful state. There are two groups that wanted



to build a pit mine with a dam filled with toxic stuff. It would mine copper and gold which would kill the sea life and, by and by, their livelihood.

Another protest that brought people from other environmental groups was when people came to Washington D.C. to protest the Keystone XL pipeline. I find that people through time did things like this to show they care about our earth like the Native American Indians. I forget his first name but his last name was Coby Iron Eyes. His TV ads were good when I was young and never had seen a real Indian. I felt sad about people throwing their trash out on the ground from cars or even when they're walking.

I recall a schooner called the Clear Water. It would go up and down the Hudson River. Pete Seeger helped the Clear Water to clean the Hudson River. Some time ago, I don't know if he's still around or not, but there was a young man and his helper who were cleaning the Mississippi River. I often pick up trash on the floor or off and near the table. I often dream that if I had a pickup truck, I could pick up the trash around the Worker.

I have a memory of Smokey the Bear, who was a bear cub that was found hanging to a burned tree for dear life. He was helped down. Since I guess his parents weren't around he was put in a zoo cage after a while he was given the name Smokey Bear. He, I guess, was a message for stopping forest fires.

I am sorry for the two or three Native American Indians

that died here in Des Moines. They are Rick, who is buried in Montana, James, who earned a metal of honor in Vietnam and the other was a woman but I don't know her name.

This weekend I got some interesting news from The Native Sun Newspaper. The number of people protesting the Bakken Pipeline is in the thousands. Jessica also just got arrested, protesting the pipeline.

I can't get sleep, got to finish this article. I like Pine Ridge, South Dakota, the poorest county in the country where the unemployment rate is 84%. Besides wanting to be heard, people want homes, good jobs that will last a long time and never be sold so they have to move. I used to think I live in a county that thought of its people and its people thought of the country. I still believe in it as I look around. In memory of the Native American Indians that died in Des Moines Iowa, Rick, James and the woman, I have a thought that's been eating at me. The idea is, would a Catholic Worker, if given the chance, survive in Pine Ridge if it could be run by Indians? Maybe other Catholic Worker houses could help with donations and take time to see another culture and try things like see a pow wow. I'd like to see what people think. If you would like to write me about my idea, send me a letter.

Thank you,  
Norman

## SAVE THE DATE!

Oct. 7-10 SOA Convergence at US/Mexican Border

Since 1990, SOA Watch has been meeting at the gates of Fort Benning, Georgia, to demonstrate their desire to close the School of the Americas, which has been responsible for training combat forces for Latin America since the 1980s. Congress's only concession has been to rename it the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation – WHINSEC – in 2001. Now in the 26th year of its existence, SOA Watch is moving the annual convergence to the border at Nogales, AZ/Mexico this October 7-10. The move is to highlight the broader issues of migration this election year.

As politicians build walls, we must build bridges. Join other people of conscience to take a stand and get a first-hand look at the situation and issues that surround migration.

For more information about SOA Watch and the convergence this fall check out [www.soaw.org/border/](http://www.soaw.org/border/). An excellent

source of information about border security is Todd Miller's book *Border Patrol Nation*. See for yourself what the issues are and place your feet on the path the migrants must walk.

Travel from Iowa by chartered bus to the convergence is leaving Thursday, Oct. 6 and returning Monday, Oct. 10.

For more information about the bus trip to the convergence, contact Mary Ann Koch at [kochmaryann2014@gmail.com](mailto:kochmaryann2014@gmail.com).

Oct. 7-9 International Catholic Worker Gathering in Las Vegas

We are excited about hosting the Catholic Worker Gathering in October. It has been five years since the last gathering in Las Vegas when over 300 people came. Here is the information we have so far, we hope you can come. There is no fee for this event (food, housing, etc.) but donations will not be turned down.

Before you come to Las Vegas, please register online or mail in registration form: <http://lvcw.org/gathering2016.htm>

Accommodations:

We have beds at a hostel and sleeping bag space. If you prefer a motel, please book the Plaza Hotel or another hotel directly. For the hostel or sleeping bag space (both provided free or donation), let us know on the reservation form.

Airline / Bus Pick-Ups:

Please contact us or send us travel arrival and departure information on the registration form.

Musicians:

Please contact us if you would like to be part of the Catholic Worker Marching Band for the demonstration at Creech.

Symbols, Photos:

Please bring photos to share and symbols representative of your Catholic Worker community.

Las Vegas Catholic Worker  
500 W. Van Buren Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89106  
(702) 647-0728  
<http://www.lvcw.org>



# No Place to Hide

By Julie Brown

“When the bombing starts, where do you hide?” That is what I asked Sulttan. “There is no place. Behind rocks, wherever we can. We all just run in every direction. Everyone has to find their own place. Even the children.”

The last shelling started on June 23rd at 10 a.m. and did not stop until after noon. The farmer said over 160 bombs fell on the small area in those two hours. After it was over, many animals had been killed and three children were injured. It was this story that we heard in detail as we documented the events of that day.

In the Choman District of Iraqi Kurdistan high in the mountains near the Iranian border lies the Allana Gully. It was here that Christian Peacemaker Teams visited after hearing reports of a recent cross border shelling from Iran. The drive through the mountains to this remote area was slow. The road is an unpaved rocky path that hangs on the sides of very steep mountain ledges. In many places it is so narrow that the wheels of our vehicle came dangerously close to sliding off the edge.

“When the bombings start, some families try to flee in their vehicles. You have seen the road, It is very dangerous.” Sulttan pointed to the rugged path, it’s the only road that leads down.

On this day there was no shelling and the sun was bright. We exited our vehicle next to a small grouping of canvas tents. Several gentlemen along with a few children approached as we introduced ourselves and our purpose for being in their village.

Sulttan was one of the first people we met. As soon as Sulttan heard we had come to talk about the shelling from Iran he summoned a young girl with long blond hair. It was his daughter. He reached down and gingerly took her arm and lifted it up for us to see. He explained that she had been hit by shrapnel. Metal had entered her palm and lodged in her wrist. She had to have surgery to remove the shrapnel leaving a wound that went all the way through. As I took pictures of her injuries I could see the trauma on her face. Her eyes were red and swollen and her expressions did not match those of the other children that had now gathered around us. She was clearly still very traumatized.

Sulttan took us away from the tents further down the road. He stopped overlooking a small pasture full of grazing sheep and explained that twenty-five families farm the surrounding area every year. His family pays several thousand dollars each year for this land to farm and graze animals. Even with the shelling, they must stay because farming is their only source of income. He indicated that in this field was where the children were when they were injured, An eight year old boy with bright



curly red hair had injuries to his arm, a thirteen year old boy had injuries to his neck and also his daughter had an injured wrist. All from shrapnel.

I looked at the field below. If shelling were to start, where would people go? There was nowhere. Only a few small rocks.

A group of children descended from the tent village toward us. They stopped to play in a small stream that snaked the side of the path and I took out my video camera. As I approached they all stood and looked at me. One of the children said “video” and pointed at my camera. For the next forty-five minutes the children and I took turns using the “video.” I filmed them, they filmed me. There was laughing and smiling and we all used the camera as we walked slowly back to the tent village.

Once we reached the tents we rejoined the larger group where the adults were finishing their last words about the bombing. The mood among the children immediately changed. They were more serious as they now stood with the adults, looking up and listening. Villagers had reported that members of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran were thought to be in the area and that is what prompted the shelling. At first drones came, then the shelling started. It became clear that Iran had the use of surveillance drones yet still repeatedly targeted these farmers and their children. In other areas people reported that the targeting of civilians is a commonly used tactic. Many

locals believe that they are targeted so that the civilians will force armed groups out of the area for various governments. The men, their wives, and the children in the Allana Gully only have dreams of farming and living in peace. Being used as pawns in a cross-border conflict has caused nothing but destruction to these families for years.

When I had handed my video camera to the children earlier that day I intended to capture what the world looked like through their eyes but there are things we can never fully see. What does bombing look like to a seven year old? What does it look like to try to hide alone behind a rock as the world explodes around you? How does the world look through the eyes of a twelve year old with shrapnel lodged in her body? How can children make sense of this when even the adults do not have the answers? I looked again at the girl with the injured hand and then at the rest of the children. I know it had only been a couple of weeks since the last shelling but can time possibly ever heal all of these wounds?

*Julie Brown is a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams’ Iraqi Kurdistan Project. She splits her time between Iraq and the Des Moines Catholic Worker as a member of DMCW’s Rachel Corrie Project.*

## 2016 Hiroshima Vigil at STRATCOM

By Frank Cordaro

During this year’s 3 1/2 day Aug 6-9 vigil at the main gate of Offutt’s STRATCOM in Bellevue, NE we experienced the best vigiling weather ever! Overcast with highs in the 70s and low 80s for most of the time! That don’t happen very often in August in Omaha!

This year’s vigil also attracted the smallest number of vigilers on record. Most of the time we were bouncing between three and five. We hit the double-digit mark the last day, August 9th for our 11 a.m. closing ceremony with 13!

After taking the group photo we gathered around to hear a reading of Thomas Merton’s “Original Child Bomb” poem about how the bomb came into being. Then we read the “A-bomb Apology Petition” message that Art Laffin from the Washington DC Catholic Worker and many DC-based faith

and justice groups delivered to the White House on August 6th.

We were not able to send a contingent to the Northrop Grumman’s site 2 1/2 miles away during the vigil because we never had enough folks at the line to manage a two-site presence. The best we could manage this year was to ask all those who could to join us after our August 9th closing ceremony in front of the Northrop Grumman site for a photo op ... to make the visual connection between our vigiling at STRATCOM and the work being done at Northrop Grumman. They are one and the same. And our bring down STRATCOM campaign is now at least a two-site effort, for sure more local sites exist!

One more thing, in this otherwise very short report. These yearly events surrounding our Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemorations are more and more an old person thing to

do. Perhaps that is as it should be ... I believe us “Baby Boomers” are marked by this historical event like no other generation living today. And it’s all about our denial of what we did and who we have become. We have lived our whole lives off the ill-got gains of WWII. Every social advancement we feel we have made in this country in our lifetimes regarding human rights for women, blacks, gays, all social and economic advancements, have all been too short sighted for the planet and for the rest of the human race. Until we start questioning our personal and group allegiances to our current US military global empire, our problem is even bigger than nuclear weapons; it’s our national denial and the blindness that comes with it.

BIG THANK YOUS to Kathleen Hughes for opening her home to us vigilers for housing and food! YOU ROCK Kathleen!



Participants in the annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki vigil at STRATCOM on August 9, 2016.

# Gimme Shelter: Eradicating Homelessness One Person at a Time

By Joe Mounsey

So, I get it that “the system” sucks and needs dismantling. I get it that “the system” and its evils creates the environment that devours human life. Believe me, I get it. My question is: what do we do until the revolution comes? Is it at all possible to end homelessness for some, if not most of the people who are currently homeless?

I am painfully aware that a lot of times so-called “shelters” do nothing to end homelessness for the folks who partake of their “hospitality.” Take for example the scandalous example of one shelter here in Des Moines where a resident can get tossed out on the street (in whatever weather) for not attending chapel. I was shocked to hear this and when I asked the question “what if the person got a job and had to work at that time?” I was told that it didn’t matter, one HAS TO GO TO CHAPEL. It didn’t make much sense to me since I figured (and I believe most rational people would also figure) that getting a job, having some sort of regular income was a good initial step to being able to afford some kind of housing and not needing to be in a shelter at all. Then I had one of those “a-ha moments!” Ding! Said shelter must be receiving some kind of subsidy based on the number of people receiving its “hospitality.” Silly me. They have a vested fiduciary interest in keeping the number of shelter guests up.

For sure, the way that the social services system works with the homeless population is bassackwards in my humble opinion. When a person tries to get some services it works like this: there is a “needs assessment,” i.e. the intake person tries to figure out what the person needs vis-à-vis “entitlements” (food stamps, primary health care, other medical (often psychiatric) care, disability, etc. While all this is happening, a person of course lives in a “shelter,” sometimes for years.

Now, by definition, someone who is homeless needs a home. Housing is more often than not the LAST “entitlement” a person gets. Maybe never. Does anyone besides me think this is madness?

When I was working for Community Alliance Mental Health Rehabilitation as a case manager for their “homeless services” section, we received a training which made a lot of sense to me. Some folks in NYC got a building into which randomly selected homeless persons were given living space. They were told that their bills would be paid for them for a year. If at the end of that year they could not take over themselves, they would have to move. At the end of a year 85% were able to maintain their residences on their own! 85%!

Now, I am not proposing that someone give the Catholic Worker a building for such and experiment here in Des Moines, nice as that would be. However, I think I have come

up with a workable model for a shelter, whose mission would be to eradicate homelessness for its guests within a period of time related and geared to individuals.

Here goes: yes, there is a building, a house, whatever. Folks coming in would be told and would have to understand that it was temporary transitional housing and that the goal was for them to get and maintain their own residence after a period of time to be determined according to their own particulars. Each guest would initially be assigned various chores: sanitation, maintenance, cooking, etc. You catch my drift.

Each guest would also be required to go out and find some work. (More on that later.) It is my experience that many of the homeless population have some kind of marketable skill or talent. While it is true that some folks have lost the ability or do not have the concentration necessary to keep a job, that is not necessarily a problem.

At Emmaus House in East Harlem (where I spent a subdiaconal year), they had a carpentry shop and built cabinets and did other woodworking and sold their services, the profits from which were divided among the folks who worked in it. The shop was run by a master carpenter who donated his time and was given a small quarterly percentage of the profits as a stipend. His job had planned obsolescence though, since he trained apprentices and journeypersons to manage when he was not around. At collective meetings, finances were discussed and profits divided. Some of these carpenters did some house restoration and painting and stuff, which was lucrative for them. There were also plumbers and folks who did UVAC.

I digress. Back to the model. The house would be staffed by homeless activists who were also case managers, each having his/her own specialty. Each guest would have regular contact with their case manager, who would also have as their objective to eradicate homelessness for their person. This is on a case-by-case basis. Some folks might need three months or so, others more time.

Like I have said, no social service agency ever asks anyone seeking services, “What talents/gifts do you have?” It is assumed that they have none. For many people, especially those who have been felons, there are no opportunities or very limited opportunities to get and keep gainful employment. So, what about employment?

No doubt there are auto mechanics, carpenters, painters, masons, cosmetologists even, people-of-consciousness who are as tired and dismayed by the current state of affairs and who could/would see the benefit to having a workforce in which they would have a large say in its utilization.

Guests would naturally contribute to their room and board, but also they would also have to work with a financial planner, whose job it would be to explain and help facilitate



saving/bill-paying skills that would be designed to get the guest the necessary finances to eventually take off on their own.

NO ONE IS DOING THIS AT ALL! For sure, there are a ton of questions that arise, but it is the particular charism of Catholic Worker collectives to decide questions and issues as a collective.

Not everyone can do this, and sadly, some folks will not be able to. However, it is one of the steps that can be taken today to end homelessness for some people. Like I said, one person at a time is my personal agenda for mostly everything.

*Joe Mounsey is a regular volunteer at the Catholic Worker of Des Moines Dingman House. He has worked for many years with the homeless population both at Catholic Charities of Omaha's Campus for Hope and at Community Alliance Mental Health Rehabilitation, also in Omaha.*

## Peacestock 2016

By Jessica Reznicek

This summer I attended my 2nd consecutive annual Veteran's for Peace Peacestock celebration. And so I for the second time found myself graced in the blessed company of U.S. Veterans from all over the country who are hard at work organizing events, actions and seminars all year long, and in doing so are moving our society one step at a time in their march toward peace. I was reminded at Peacestock of how hard all VFP chapters work day in and day out toward educating us through their resistance and compassion. Being moved by Peacestock again this year, I asked our local VFP chapter president, Gilbert Landolt, if he would allow me to write briefly about how I experienced the event.

My time spent at Peacestock 2016, my drive up there with Mr. Al Burney, a member of our local Des Moines VFP chapter 163, and what our local VFP chapter 163 president Gilbert Landolt truly mean to me contains such depth and utter appreciation that I could not possibly fit it all into this 500 word article. So, I'm going to start first with the nuts and bolts: the basics of who and what Peacestock is, what this year's program entailed, etc. and then conclude with the personal heartfelt mushy stuff.

Peacestock 2016 was held for its second consecutive year at Hobgoblin Farm, near Red Wing, MN. The event was this year sponsored by VFP Chapter 115 in Red Wing and VFP Chapter 27 of Minneapolis and included a mixture of speakers, peace activists and musicians. This year Peacestock hosted two keynote speakers, Dr. Todd Green and Mr. Michael German.

Dr. Green is an associate professor of European and American religious history and interfaith dialogue at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Green's presentation and the name of his most recent book was “The Fear of Islam: An introduction to Islamophobia in the West.”

Mr. German worked for sixteen years as a special agent with



Al Burney at the Veterans' Day parade at the Iowa State Fair on August 9, 2016.

the FBI, where he focused on domestic terrorism and covert operations. He now works with the Brennan Center for Justice's Liberty and National Security Program, which strives to ensure that our U.S. government respects human rights and freedoms in conducting the fight against terrorism.

Now, onto that conclusion I promised.

I am not a Veteran. Nor, admittedly, am I even a member or associate member of our local VFP chapter. But I am never so caught up in my own campaigns and missions to miss an opportunity to pause and give attention and appreciation to Gilbert and Al's work and presence here in every aspect of our Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, from resistance and peace work to washing dishes and connecting with our underprivileged guests. Their dedication and never-ending patience

has always brought for me personally a sense of legitimacy to the work we do, to the words we speak and to the waves which break around here. So you can only try to imagine how powerful an experience it is felt to simply be a part of this, an annual event wherein VFP members gather from all over the Midwest.

To Al and Gilbert:

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for teaching me what quite simply could never have been taught any other way than through sheer action and example.

Peace,  
Jessica Reznicek



# Apologies

By Taylor Vander Well

I've been volunteering at DMCW for 9 months now and when you're a staff volunteer, you see the same people come through every week. First, you get to know names and faces. Then you learn things like how Stanley takes his coffee and how when Kim asks if you have noodles she means ramen noodles and nothing else. You learn that Jimmy prefers donations of black socks to white ones and that if anyone is mouthing off, Annie will most certainly have your back.

The longer I'm here, the more I learn not just about preferences and personalities, but about what happens on the other side of the street when our doors have closed for the day. I am only privy to seeing the tip of many icebergs, but it's enough to keep me from living in comfortable ignorance of what lurks beneath the water where I float.

I can fill a plate, clean and bandage cuts, drive someone to detox, or offer my undivided attention and a hug. But all the love and good deeds in the world don't change the fact that at the end of the day I'm the one sleeping inside when it's below zero outside. I'm the one who can raid the fridge at night if my stomach is growling. I'm the one who can work. I'm the one with a car to take me to work. I'm the one who goes home to people who aren't abusive or tweaking. What do I do with the privilege I carry as I attempt to live in solidarity with these neighbors of mine?

There have been several times I've asked one of our guests a question, completely unprepared for where the conversation would go. Totally unaware that I just signed up to have my ears violated. I've had some real good sob sessions in my car lately as I drive and decompress from all the information I take in. I hate, hate, hate, HATE that most of the time all I can do is say, "I'm so sorry."

I'm so sorry that your husband beat you until your eyes

swelled shut and you could feel your mouth fill with blood.

I'm so sorry that you've been shot 9 times and can show me the scars scattered across your abdomen.

I'm so sorry that you're finding it impossible to stay sober and it's ruining everything.

I'm so sorry that 3 of your 4 sons died when they were just kids.

I'm so sorry that your fingers are frost bitten.

I'm so sorry that you were forced into prostitution and that you feel trapped and violated.

It feels like there are apologies constantly pumping through my bloodstream. All I know is that I cannot burn out, get cynical, and angry. I cannot disengage. In this place where I live, contemplation and action are connected. Connecting to Love allows the community to stay engaged working for some semblance of peace and justice when the presence of pain is so thick and tangible. I believe this house is holy ground and these neighbors are immensely loved in the only way we know how: to show up, to see and listen, to stand together, and to know how they take their coffee.

God, I hope it's felt and that it's enough.

Love,  
Taylor

P.S. I know this is kind of heavy, but I promise most of the time there's a lot of joy and good vibes all around.



Taylor and Hilary took a day trip to explore the beautiful Grotto of Redemption in West Bend, IA on June 4, 2016

## DMCW T-SHIRTS!

These beautiful shirts, printed by the good folks at StreetCred Studios in Des Moines, feature art by Fritz Eichenberg and the names of, we think, all the different folks who have been a part of this community over the past 40 years. Own a piece of history! They are just \$10.



## Rev. Billy joins 5th annual Occupy the World Food Prize



Learn more about Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping at <http://www.revbilly.com>.

We are happy to announce that Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping (including musicians and members of the choir!) will be joining OWFP this year for our 5th annual showdown in Des Moines during the week of the World Food Prize.

Iowa is at the center of the global industrial agricultural system that is driven by profit at the expense of the planet and living beings. The World Food Prize is one of this system's most potent symbols. Join us in calling out the destruction wrought by this system and help us champion a vision of agriculture that is sustainable and democratic.

What: 5th Annual Rally & Direct Action with Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping  
When: Thursday, Oct. 13, 2016  
Time: 6 p.m.  
Where: Iowa Statehouse the night of the World Food Prize Awards Ceremony.

### Occupy the World Food Prize Working Committee

Frank Cordaro:	<a href="mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com">frank.cordaro@gmail.com</a>	(515) 490-2490
Sharon Donovan:	<a href="mailto:sjbd14@gmail.com">sjbd14@gmail.com</a>	(515) 987-5443
Tom Mathews:	<a href="mailto:Tmathews@aol.com">Tmathews@aol.com</a>	(515) 979-9318

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VOLUME 40, NO. 2

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Prayers . . . without them, nothing happens.

### VOLUNTEERS:

Monthly meal providers.  
Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance . . . without them, we burn out.

### FOOD:

Salted Butter, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Salt, Pepper, Milk, Olive Oil, Fruit, Vegetables, Meat and Fish, Cheese, Juice (sugar free), Fresh Garlic, Salad Dressing, Soups and Stews (both canned and fresh). Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings. . .

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE:

Feminine Hygiene Items, Candles, Ibuprofen, Multi-

vitamins, Antibiotic Ointment, Band-Aids, Lip Balm.

### TOILETRIES:

Razors, Deodorant, Shaving Cream, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Soap, Toothpaste. (Small sizes preferred for handout . . .) Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

### NEEDED CLOTHING:

Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies, Coats, Work Pants. (All Sizes—especially big . . .) Sleeping Bags, Blankets, Pillows.

### HOUSEHOLD

#### SUPPLIES:

Silverware, Dishes, Bleach, Laundry Detergent, Environmentally-Friendly Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil Soap, Pine-sol,

Trash Bags, Brooms, Rugs, Candles, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels.

### HOUSE REPAIRS:

With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers—individuals or groups—with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

### LIBRARY:

Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library.

### \$CASH MONEY\$:

Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, our community gardening and for the continued publication and mailing of the *via pacis*, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

## DMCW WEBSITE

For up to date news & info on the community, the Rachel Corrie Project, Berrigan House and Occupy the World Food Prize visit the DMCW web page: [www.dmcatholicworker.org/](http://www.dmcatholicworker.org/).



Stop Homeless Evictions in Des Moines  
**p. 1**

Des Moines Workers' Alliance Report on Prison Organizing  
**p. 1**

Join the Fight Against the Dakota Access/Bakken Pipeline  
**p. 3**

Des Moines Catholic Workers Celebrate 40 Years  
**p. 4**

Holy Works and Holy Shit  
**p. 5**

No Place to Hide  
**p. 9**

Gimme Shelter: Eradicating Homelessness One Person at a Time  
**p. 10**

Apologies  
**p. 11**